Welcome to the *new* BidLink!

Three years in the making, the latest release of BidLink is a revolutionary and powerful tool for managing many aspects of your business with the Defense Department. The compilation of ideas submitted by our clients and other leaders in the Defense Industry combined with a new, completely redesigned core, has resulted in a product that is faster, more powerful and easier to use than ever before.

Our goal from the beginning was to create an indispensable tool for Government contractors to save them time and to help them operate more efficiently. In the pages to follow we will show you all of the exciting new features that BidLink has to offer and how you can use them to improve your business.
Introduction

This manual is designed to educate the reader on the basic functionality of the new BidLink website. With the immense amount of data BidLink gathers and processes on a daily basis we needed to find a more user friendly and effective way of letting our clients interact with this data. Out of this challenge, the new BidLink was born. Our new generation of service was primarily driven by numerous customer requests for specific information and services. We pride ourselves on giving our clients the ability to locate hard-to-find Government information, along with the necessary tools for analyzing this data without the need for in-house computer programmers and analysts. The information is displayed in a format that the average user as well as the expert user can easily view and interpret. Our end goal is to provide plentiful and accurate data to a wide range of customers allowing them ready access to this information so that they may complete their tasks with greater ease and efficiency.

Audience

The BidLink user family is very diverse. The size of the typical company subscribing to BidLink ranges from sole proprietors to large corporations with thousands of employees along with many U.S. Government users. The variety of business and Government types is just as extensive and includes Government contractors (from beginner to expert), Brokers, Distributors, Engineers and Military, just to name a few. Anyone needing information related to products or services that the Government procures will find that BidLink is the only tool they need to locate, process and analyze the information.

Organization

This user’s guide is available in both printed and online formats. It is designed to be a reference for the new BidLink website with chapters broken down by specific topics. This design will allow users to locate a single topic without the need to read the entire guide. This guide is also complimented by on-line help with numerous references and educational videos. Visit www.BidLink.net/help for additional details.

The BidLink User’s Guide will be updated as new features are added to the website. Be sure to check for the latest version online.
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1.0 OVERVIEW OF NEW FEATURES

The new BidLink is divided into three main areas:

- **The Bid Manager**
  A utility that locates, tracks, analyzes and manages DoD solicitations

- **Archive Data**
  Access to a wide variety of Government databases

- **Tools and Services**
  A collection of services to help you maximize your use of BidLink

**Bid Manager Display and Tools**

The Bid Manager helps you search for, manage and analyze your Government bidding effort through a variety of new tools and services. One key feature is our new display. In two-frame mode, you can search for and summarize your solicitations on the left half of your screen while viewing the full details of a specific bid on the right. Further, your bids can be grouped in folders based on criteria that you set up. Many of our clients group their bids into categories such as “initial review”, “research”, “waiting for costing”, “ready to bid”, and “bid submitted”. You can decide on your own folder names and which bids you keep in them.

Another new feature is our Enhanced Bid Viewer. The Bid Viewer lets you open and close “window shades” based on what elements of the bid you want to view. With a single click, you can pop open items such as procurement history, ML-C data, transportation data, packaging data, technical characteristics, etc. Your most recent settings will be remembered for subsequent searches. The Bid Viewer can be set to any custom size.

See the **Bid Manager** section of this user guide for complete information on how to use the Bid Manager.

**Archive Data Searching**

We have added a sophisticated and much faster searching interface to help you locate all types of part number data and pricing. BidLink allows customers to explore numerous databases in a single search to save time. Some of the databases covered are:

- **NSN / Part Number Cross Reference (MCRD)**
- **Procurement History of Contracts**
Military Specifications and Standards
Vendor Data (CAGE / CCR / SBA)
Qualified Parts Lists (QPL)
Extensive DoD Bid Data
Individual Contract Action Reports such as DD350’s
FAR Regulations
Technical Characteristics

Throughout the BidLink website, there are “hot spots”, which provide detailed information about the data you are viewing. Clicking the field heading or a field value can offer definitions, requirements and other valuable information. “Hot spots” are indicated by the highlight color you see below:

Floating Windows and Mouse Wheel

BidLink combines a number of complex features into a single screen by incorporating a layered-window design. Controls and dialogs can be opened, closed and moved around on the screen by clicking near the top of the floating window and dragging it. The red power button will close the window.

Another useful tool on the new BidLink website is the mouse wheel. If your mouse doesn’t have a wheel, get one that does – you won’t regret it. For floating windows that run off the screen, you can use the mouse wheel to scroll them up and down.
Data Analysis Tools

We have added a full arsenal of analysis tools to assist you in evaluating your bidding success, analyzing your competition and reviewing price / cost projections. See the individual sections, below, for specific information on our analysis tools.

Original Document Retention

At BidLink we understand how important access to original Government documents can be. We keep all original solicitations and contract awards in our system so they can be searched and reviewed at any time. Most original documents are identified by a hyperlink so in a single click you can view and analyze an original bid or contract. All original documents are stored indefinitely so you can view and print a contract even when it was awarded a decade ago.

EDI Services

BidLink’s EDI services allow for direct access to EDI bids through the DoD trading partners. Our EDI data is updated every 15 minutes so you will never miss a bid.

Data Protection and Privacy

At BidLink we are always concerned about our client’s privacy. We have put in place new safeguards that will always protect any information that you want to keep private. For additional information on data protection see the BidLink Privacy Policy at BidLink.net.
2.0 THE BID MANAGER

BidLink’s Bid Management System is a powerful tool for finding and managing solicitations. The two-frame design maximizes the use of wide-screen displays to provide more information on the screen at one time. A University study has shown that productivity increases with screen size. A classic mode is also available for those with smaller monitors; however in classic mode some features may not be available.

When you first log into BidLink, you arrive at your homepage (see image below), which includes a summary of all saved searches and the number of records for each along with recent news and statistics. Every time you arrive at this screen, BidLink checks for new bids and makes updates as needed. This will allow you to quickly determine if any new bids have been added that match your search criteria.
New Bid Search

To create a new search, click on “Add New Search”, which is located on your Homepage just under the section labeled “My Saved Search Profiles”. This will take you to the bid search screen (below), where you can provide details about the search. The Bid Search screen is broken down into several sections as shown here:

1. Enter your search terms in the large box labeled “Search Terms”. One per line.
2. Select a category (i.e. CAGE, Part #, Keywords, item name)
3. For a regular search, leave “Show results matching these terms” selected
4. Leave “must include these terms” selected.
5. Click Save changes to search.
6. You can add multiple searches to a single search, ie: a CAGE search, part # and NAICS, by repeating the above process.
Search Group

The real power of the bid search engine is the search group feature. As opposed to reviewing many searches each day, BidLink allows you to combine many saved searches into one saved search group. The results can be viewed as if they were a single search. This saves you time by reducing redundancy. You can even combine regular searches with “not” searches, allowing you to further refine results by eliminating bids with particular keywords, part numbers, etc.

Global NSN Not list

If you use the global NSN not list, you will see one additional search at the bottom of each group. This is a special search that allows you to create a list of NSNs that should be eliminated from all searches. The green dot to the right of this group can be clicked to activate / deactivate the global NSN not search. Bids can be added by right-clicking on any bid in the search results.

Right-click a bid to add it to the NSN not list
Search Options

This area allows you to further refine a result set, as well as control how it is displayed. Each area is described below:

**Dates** – Limit results to All, Today, Recent number of days, or a particular date. When limiting a search by date it is important to note that BidLink records the date that the bid was processed within the BidLink system. In most cases this will be the same as the date that the bid was issued. There are however occasions when a bid’s issue date will not match the bid’s processing date.

**Only Show** – These checkboxes allow for additional filtering on items such as Small Business Set Aside and Technical Data availability (TDP).

**Sort by** – Use this dropdown menu to select how you want the results of the bid search sorted. You can also change your sort by clicking the field heading in the output display.

**Estimated Value** – Use this dropdown menu to limit your search by the estimated contract value. Not all buying centers provide procurement history for the items they buy. If BidLink does not have pricing history on an item, it will NOT show up when you limit your search by estimated value.

- If you wish to save this search with a name, you can do this on the bid manager screen as detailed below.

When you are done, click “show results” to see the bid manager.
Clicking “Show Results” will run the search group and take you to the Bid Manager (described below). After submitting the search, you will see the Bid Manager; a two-frame display of search results and bid details (see image on next page). You can resize the two frames by dragging the divider left or right. If you have a small screen, you can choose “classic view” at the bottom of the left frame for a single frame view.

**Bid Manager Display:**

A Bid Manager Display has many new and useful features:

- The Bid Manager remembers which bids you have viewed
- Wide-screen display for more efficient use
- Notes area for making comments related to a specific bid
- Folders for storage and management of bids
- Drag and Drop functionality
- PDF reports for each bid that can be saved and e-mailed
- Access to the BidLink Quick search easy access to archive data
- Search grouping to consolidate multiple complex searches
- Search refinement tools to reduce irrelevant results and save time
- Easy links to original documents (.pdf format)
- Pop-open “window shades” to view and hide detailed information
- Part number cross-reference data with part validity and links to vendors
- Procurement history with links to contracts and links to vendors
- Current NIIN status indicators with pop-up help references
- Government Management data with pop-up help references
- Technical Characteristics for the subject item
- Acquisition method codes
- Interchangeability and substitutability data
- Freight and packaging information with pop-up help references
- Popup links to all vendor data
Saved Search Profiles

Bid Manager

Bidlink User's Guide
This is the screen you see when you first log in to BidLink.net. BidLink checks for new bids every 15 minutes, assuring the most up-to-date bid data in the business. Our system automatically scans hundreds of Government agencies looking for procurement opportunities that might be of interest to our clients. To best locate the bids that fit your company’s needs, BidLink allows you to establish and change up to 25 Saved Search Profiles.

Each profile can contain items such as part numbers, part names, stock numbers, FSCs, item descriptions, brands, etc. You can also add other elements to each profile such as document availability, acquisition method, dollar thresholds, etc.

To help further refine your saved search profiles BidLink offers a full set of logic operators so you can add or exclude specific part numbers or names when you search. An example would be a search profile that locates all part numbers that start with ‘575R’, but excludes from the results any item that has the word “aluminum” in the item name or item description. An endless variety of inclusions and exclusions can be entered into each profile to refine your results down to a very meaningful and manageable list of current bids.

**Viewing Bid Details**

The Bid Manager is split into two frames. The left frame contains a listing of open bids, and the right frame displays the details of a single bid. As you click various bids on the left, the right frame will be populated with the details of the selected bid.

The bid details within the right frame are further divided into a multi-part display combining the resources of numerous Government databases into a single view.

Each section has a “window shade” that lets you view or hide the detailed data by clicking the section header.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Name</th>
<th>FSC</th>
<th>INC</th>
<th>F116</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WAIST BUCKLE ASSEMBLY</td>
<td>4240</td>
<td>77777</td>
<td>A23990</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crit</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>DEMIL</th>
<th>NIIN Date</th>
<th>HAZ</th>
<th>ESD</th>
<th>METALS</th>
<th>ADPE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>1995275</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“Window Shade”

The following sections will appear below each bid depending on data availability:

- **Bid Summary** – Important details about the bid
- **Full Bid Details** – Specific information from the original bid document
• Original Documents – Links to original Government documents if available
• NSN Summary – Item description and details pertaining to NSN
• Part Number Cross Reference / MCRD - NSN to part number
• Procurement History – List of previous buys for item
• NSN Status
• Management Data from the ML-C
• Technical Characteristics and NHA data
  • Interchangeability and Substitutability information
  • Forecast purchasing quantity information
  • Moe Rule
• Packaging and Freight
• Bid Notes – This area can be used to enter notes related to a specific bid

Various original documents are available within these sections. This includes original bids, previous contract awards, military specifications and other documents of interest. When available, the document number will be underlined as a link, indicating that you can click it to see the original document.

Folders

BidLink provides a system for creating folders to help manage your bids. Folders can be used to organize bids of interest, or to create a workflow for various stages of the procurement process. Your folders can be accessed by clicking on the folder icon in the upper right hand corner of the Bid Manager.

You can copy bids from your search results to various folders by dragging the bid’s folder icon. By using the checkboxes and dragging the icon above them you can copy multiple bids to a single folder.

To create a folder, open the folder panel by either clicking the “My Folders” button at the top of the Bid Manager, or by clicking the image of the folder in the Transform Dialog box. When the folder panel opens, click on “New Folder” at the bottom.
After naming the folder, click the “add” button. You will notice the folder has been added to the folder panel.

As with all floating windows, the folder panel window can be moved to any location on the screen by clicking the “My Folders” title and dragging the folder panel.

**Viewing Folders**

To view the contents of a folder, open the folder dialog box and click on the desired folder. The contents of the folder will be displayed in the bid results table.

![Folder Panel](image)

When you are finished working with your folders, you can return to your search by clicking “Back to Search Results”. This is found on the Folders Panel, but only when you are viewing a folder. This will take you back to the Search Results you were viewing before opening the folders window.
Shared Folders

You have the ability to share folders with other BidLink accounts. This feature is most useful for multi-user accounts where several people within one company are working with the same bids.

To share a folder, you must first create the folder using the instructions above. Once created, click the “Share Folder” button, select the folder you just created, and type the BidLink username of the account with which you want to share the folder. Finally, click “Share Folder”, and this folder will be accessible by the other account user. (You must subscribe to a BidLink Multi-User Account to use this feature).

Deleting Bids

To delete bids from your search results simply drag the associated folder icon to the “Trash” folder. When bids are in the “Trash” folder they will no longer show up within any of your search results. At the bottom of the column of checkboxes, there is a “Dump” button that allows you to move all checked items to the trash folder.

Deleting Folders

Folders can be removed by right-clicking the folder name, and selecting delete. Bids will be removed from that folder, but not moved to trash, so if they appear in another folder, they will still be there. If you delete a shared folder it un-shares the folder from your account.
Results Per Page

You can select how many records per page are displayed for the Procurement History and Part Number Cross Reference results tables. This allows you to page through a more manageable number of items, as opposed to displaying one long list.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Contract</th>
<th>Price</th>
<th>Qty</th>
<th>CAGE</th>
<th>Company</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009-07-29</td>
<td>SPM4A609MH442</td>
<td>2,860.00</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5V361</td>
<td>BROWN HELICOPTER INC.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-07-29</td>
<td>SPM4A609MH442</td>
<td>2,860.00</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5V361</td>
<td>BROWN HELICOPTER INC.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004-02-27</td>
<td>SP045104MMF48</td>
<td>1,681.00</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>96341</td>
<td>M/A-COM INC.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004-02-27</td>
<td>SP0451-04-MMF48</td>
<td>1,681.00</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>96341</td>
<td>M/A-COM INC.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001-11-07</td>
<td>SP045102M3593</td>
<td>1,237.00</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>96341</td>
<td>M/A-COM INC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000-05-08</td>
<td>SP045100M7772</td>
<td>1,122.00</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>96341</td>
<td>M/A-COM INC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000-04-01</td>
<td>SP045100M7772</td>
<td>1,122.00</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11555</td>
<td>M/A-COM INC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999-05-03</td>
<td>SP045199M7645</td>
<td>1,146.00</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1ESD5</td>
<td>M/A-COM INC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999-04-01</td>
<td>SP045199M7645</td>
<td>1,146.00</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1ESD5</td>
<td>M/A-COM INC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998-08-21</td>
<td>N0038396G004D</td>
<td>556.34</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>76301</td>
<td>MCDONNELL DOUGLAS C...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

You can move from page to page by clicking the “next” and “back” buttons if there are more results available.

Sorting Columns

When viewing Bid Search Results you can sort the results by clicking on the heading of the column by which you wish to sort. Clicking that column again will toggle between ascending and descending sort modes.
Notes and Comments

The notes panel floats on top of the Bid Details Screen. It has three main features.

- **My Notes** – Save a note related to a particular bid that can only be viewed by your account.

- **Post Comment** – Post a message related to a particular bid that can be viewed by any BidLink subscriber who views that bid.

- **Search Notes** – Search your own notes for keywords. This feature will also display notes for archived bids.

Managing Bids

The latest release of BidLink provides the ability to manage workflow within an office with the use of shared folders as described above. This powerful feature allows managers to delegate specific tasks to different staff members, while simultaneously allowing them to work together on various aspects of the bidding process.

For example, one staff member could set up a number of saved searches, and have the task of reviewing each day’s results for potentially relevant bids. When bids of interest are located, this person could copy the bids to a folder in another staff member’s account. This second person could research potential bids for profitability, obtaining pricing, and submit quotes, etc.

Many BidLink clients use this approach when managing a large number of bids.
Category Selection

Many search categories are available for locating bids. Selection of the proper search category is important, as this is how the BidLink search engine determines where to look for your search terms within the bid and related data. The most popular categories are CAGE code, NSN, Item Name and Part Number. Only one category can be selected per search but several searches can be included within a single search group. To establish a search on multiple categories, simply create several searches with the desired categories and then add them to the same Search Group.

Notes on Categories - Item Names and Keywords may seem similar, but they differ. An Item Name search will only look at the item description within the bid, while a Keyword search will search the entire bid document as well as the technical characteristics of the item being procured. Note however that Keyword searches take longer to process.

Search Qualifiers

Individual search categories have many selectable qualifiers. These qualifiers are used to determine which elements are included and which are excluded from each search. The possible options are as follows:

Show results matching these terms (+) – BidLink will display bids that contain your search terms.
Show results excluding these terms (-) - Items will be removed from the result set based on the search terms. This is used to eliminate unwanted results from the result set. For example, if you make rubber hoses, but not metallic ones, you could search FSC 4720 for hoses, then add a second "not" search on the words metallic or metal in the item name. When BidLink encounters bids with these terms, they will not be displayed, reducing the amount of clutter you will need to review.

Results **must** include these terms (+) One or more of the search terms for this category must be included in the result set. For example, you could set up a part number search for 1234, and a CAGE search for K7028 (both With / Must include) and see only items that match both part #1234 and CAGE K7028.

Results **may** include these terms (+) If you wanted to display all bids that contain 1234, but also display all bids that include the CAGE K7028, you can do this as well.

**Exact match, Starts with, Contains Searches**

These qualifiers are used to determine if the search engine locates bids that exactly match a search term, or partially match a search term. “Starts with” can be useful for part number searches where there may be part number suffixes. A “Starts with” search can also be useful when you are looking for bids based on an item name. For example, a “Starts with” search for the word ‘hose’ will also include:

- Hoses
- Hose Assembly
- Hose Adapter
“Contains” searches are useful for Keywords and Item Names. A contains search for the word “power” will display any word containing the term, ie:

- Power supply
- Battery power supply
- Cable assembly, power
- CRITICAL APPLICATION ITEM PALL AEROPOWER CORPORATION

Some item descriptions are long, and include keywords other than the item name, so be careful using contains. You may need to include a not list to your searches.

3.0 ARCHIVE DATA

BidLink’s library of archive data comes from many diverse sources and is constantly being updated based on current data availability. Coupled with BidLink’s new and powerful search engine you will be able to locate hard-to-find parts, determine viable vendors, estimate pricing, analyze competition, determine Government cost estimates and buying trends, and much more.

Numerous references and educational videos related to BidLink’s archive data are available at the BidLink website. Click “Help” from the main menu or visit www.BidLink.net/help for additional details.

Archive Data Updates and Retention

BidLink maintains a fully searchable database of over 54 million part numbers – and growing. Our data sources are vast and extensive coming from many different OEM and Government databases. DoD and FLIS part number data is updated every 90 days. Part interchangeability and substitutability information is also maintained on a 90-day cycle so that approved replacement components for obsolete parts can be located.

Technical Characteristics and MOE rule data are updated every 90 days making it easier than ever to locate currently available products by characteristics.

Government ML-C data, ML-C Phrase data and packaging data are updated every quarter giving current access to estimated pricing and agency-specific buying requirements. ML-C data that is no longer maintained by the Government but may still hold value for non-Government applications is also maintained. Such data will contain an OGS flag (out of Government system).
Procurement history information is updated on an ongoing basis and is derived from various Government and non-Government sources. For some Government buying centers, an item’s unit price may not be available but total contract price will be available. Such data will be displayed with a flag in the unit price column.

Military specifications and standards are updated on-the-fly. This means that every time you perform a search for a military specification or standard, BidLink will query several outside databases for any notices, updates or superseding documents. All documents will be converted to .pdf format so they can be easily downloaded and printed.

**Part Number Search**

To search for a part number or a National Stock Number, start by clicking “NSN Lookup” from the main menu. You will see a screen similar to the one shown below.

Let us start by performing a part number search on ‘MS51957-18B’. Type this number into the Part Number field and select “Exact match” from the dropdown menu located to the right of the part number field (see example on next page).

Click the “Search” button at the top or the bottom of the screen and you will see the NSN Detailed Report displayed. This Report includes the following items:

- Bid Summary – Important details about the bid
- Full Bid Details – Specific information from the original bid document
- Original Documents – Links to original Government documents if available
- NSN Summary – Item description and details pertaining to NSN
- Part Number Cross Reference / MCRD - NSN to part number
- Procurement History – List of previous buys for item
- NSN Status
- Management Data from the ML-C
- Interchangeability and Substitutability information
- Technical Characteristics and NHA data
- Forecast purchasing quantity information
- Moe Rule
- Packaging and Freight
- Bid Notes – This area can be used to enter notes related to a specific bid

Each section of the NSN Detailed Report has a “window shade” that lets you view or hide the detailed data by clicking the section header.
Part Number Search (Exact match)
The image below shows the first two sections of the NSN Report; NSN Summary and Part Number Cross Reference:

---

**NSN Summary for 5305-00-433-3744**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Name</th>
<th>FSC</th>
<th>INC</th>
<th>FTIG</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SCREW, MACHINE</td>
<td>5305</td>
<td>06657</td>
<td>A500D0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crit</td>
<td>Type</td>
<td>Reason</td>
<td>DEMIL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>1970229</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Part Number Cross Reference (MCRL / MCRD)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part #</th>
<th>CAGE</th>
<th>ISC</th>
<th>RNVC</th>
<th>RNOC</th>
<th>RNAAC</th>
<th>RNFC</th>
<th>RNSC</th>
<th>DAC</th>
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<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>SE</td>
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<td>D</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>D</td>
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<tr>
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<td>D</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>BOSCH REXROTH G</td>
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**Note** – *Notice that the number we searched in this example MS51957-18B is associated to a Military Standard, which is represented in the Company field.*

Part Number Search (Starts with) – For this example we will use the same basic number as we used above except that the trailing characters (-18B) are removed. Type MS51957 in the search field and select “Starts with” from the dropdown menu located to the right of the part number field (see example below).
Part Number Search (Starts with)

Then, click the “Search” button at the top or bottom of the screen and the following results will be displayed:
Notice that the result set is much larger (415 records). From this list, a specific part number or NSN can be accessed by clicking on the NSN. Once selected, the display will contain the NSN Detailed Report described above.

*Note - If you paged through this list using the ‘Next 25’ button you would eventually see the number MS51957-18B like the example above where we performed the exact match search.*

**National Stock Number Search**

Searching for a National Stock Number (NSN) – In the example below, we entered NSN 5305-00-071-2070. The same results would be displayed if we had entered the NSN without dashes, 5305000712070, or just the NIIN (last 9 characters of an NSN), 000712070.

Additional searching tips can be found in BidLink’s extensive help library. Click on the “Help with searching” button on the search screen to access this.
Click the ‘Search” button and you will see the NSN Detailed Report. This report is divided into the sections described above.

Various original documents are available within these sections. This includes previous contract awards, military specifications and other documents of interest. When available, the document number will be underlined as a link, indicating that you can click it to see the original document.
Viewing, Printing, and Saving NSN Detailed Reports

The same “window shade” technology that is used in the Bid Detail View is utilized in the NSN Detailed Report. Each section of interest can be quickly viewed by simply clicking on the section header. If there are specific elements of the NSN Detailed Report that you want to view every time you perform a search, BidLink will remember your most recent selections for subsequent reports.

The NSN Detailed Report can be printed or saved by clicking NSN “Report – Summary” or “NSN Report – Full” buttons located just after the first section. A report will be generated in .pdf format so it can be easily printed. By clicking on your .pdf viewer’s “Save” button you can also save the report for e-mailing or for future reference.

*Note- You will need to have a .pdf reader installed on your local computer to view and print reports. This reader can be downloaded at [http://get.adobe.com/reader/](http://get.adobe.com/reader/).*

Searching Procurement History

BidLink’s procurement history database is derived from various Government and non-Government sources. This database can be searched by clicking on the “Procurement History” button in BidLink’s main navigation menu, and then entering a part number, NSN, CAGE code or contract number.

You can also choose the “Exact Match” and “Starts with” options from the dropdown menus located to the right of the input fields. This will give you the ability to locate history based on a partial part number or a partial contract number. For example, by typing “SPM7M109” in the contract number field and selecting “Starts with”, you can locate all contract numbers that begin with SPM7M109.

In many cases original contract documents will be available for viewing. When available, the contract number will be underlined as a link, indicating that you can click it to see the original contract document.
4.0 VENDOR AND CAGE DATA

BidLink maintains an extensive and up-to-date database of company and Government entity information. This information is derived from many sources and is updated regularly. The information can be searched by clicking on the “Vendor Data” button in BidLink’s main navigation menu, and then entering a CAGE code, company name or location. Companies can also be located by other searchable fields such as commodity class.

The same “window shade” technology that is used in the Bid Detail View is utilized in the Vendor Data Report. Each section of interest can be quickly viewed by simply clicking on the section header. Vendor data will include the following sections based on data availability and the type of entity being researched:

- CAGE Code Data
- Central Contractor Registry (CCR)
- SBA Profile
- Commodities Analysis
- Activity Analysis
- Competition Analysis
- MCRL / MCRD Summary
- Procurement History Summary
- Available Inventories and Pricing

Each section is briefly described below.

CAGE Code Data

CAGE code data is derived from the US Government’s H4/H8 directory and includes basic company information such as company status, legal business name, address, business type and company size.

Central Contractor Registry (CCR)

BidLink provides Central Contractor Registry (CCR) data so you can easily locate key personnel within a company responsible for different aspects of Government Contracting. CCR data also includes company profile information such as size, number of employees, gross revenues and company capabilities. Our Central Contractor Registry data is updated quarterly.
Small Business Administration (SBA) Profiling

With our SBA profiling data information is available on companies registered with the Small Business Administration (SBA). This information will include items such as business structure, bonding levels, certifications, credit card acceptability, year established, etc.

Commodities Analysis

As a part of every company search BidLink performs an analysis of the company’s commodities. The provided information lists basic commodity classes, the systems that the commodities are used on, and OEMs that are supported. Links to the specific NSNs for each commodity are provided so direct access to the company’s history for the commodities can be viewed.

Activity Analysis

A Vendor’s Activity Analysis can be a valuable asset when researching a company’s performance history and competitiveness. The Activity Analysis section of the Vendor Display gives quantified activity as well as graphical depictions of the data. The information includes such items as; strongest customers, strongest FSCs, historical activity based on gross contract dollars, unit and aggregate averages, etc.

Competition Analysis

A Competition Analysis can be an indispensable tool when it comes to the bidding process. At BidLink, competition is analyzed from a query of a Company’s 200 most recent Government contracts. All current and previous suppliers are considered possible competitors and each is ranked based on two weighting factors: (1) the number of contracts a competitor has received for a given NSN, and (2) the recentness of the contract. The listed rank for each competitor is an aggregate of these two factors. The top 20 competitors are shown in the analysis report. For additional information on competition analysis, contact your BidLink Representative.
MCRL / MCRD Summary

With each vendor search, you will have the ability to view a company’s part numbers and related NSNs. Within this section the individual NSNs can be clicked to view the NSN Detailed Report containing additional part number data and full procurement history.

Procurement History Summary

In this section contract history with the DoD is displayed. In most cases, this information includes specific quantities and prices, which can be a valuable aid in determining your company’s pricing competitiveness. In many cases original contract documents will be available for viewing. When available, the contract number will be underlined as a link, indicating that you can click it to see the original contract document.

Within this section the individual NSNs can also be clicked to view the NSN Detailed Report containing additional part number information.

Available Inventories and Pricing

BidLink maintains a database of current inventory information for companies participating in our Inventory Locator Program. When available, this section will display a company’s current inventories, pricing, location and condition.

For additional information on our Inventory Locator Program, contact your BidLink Representative.
5.0 BIDLINK LIBRARY SEARCHING

Military Specifications and Standards

BidLink maintains an extensive library of Military Specifications and Standards. Searches can be performed on the specification number or by a keyword in the specification title. With every search BidLink will also review the desired specification for any updates or notices.

All specifications are viewable in .pdf format and can be downloaded and printed. For additional information on searching for specifications and standards, visit the BidLink website.

Technical Manuals

BidLink is constantly adding to its wide variety of military TO manuals and assembly-level documents. For additional information on researching BidLink’s library of Technical Manuals, visit the BidLink website.

Drawings and Data Retention

By listening to our clients we understand the need for obtaining manufacturing drawings. Although many drawings must be obtained directly from the Government or the OEM, BidLink does maintain a searchable library of drawings related to specific National Stock Numbers.

Links to many drawings will appear within the detailed bid results of each bid. In some cases links are also accessible from the NSN Detailed Report. For additional information on drawing availability, please contact your BidLink Representative.

FIIG / Technical Characteristics Drilldown

BidLink utilizes a proprietary drilldown process for locating National Stock Numbers based on a specific list of characteristics. The search is started by selecting certain keywords in the description of the desired part. Each subsequent step in the drilldown process will further refine your results until you have arrived at a short and manageable list of National Stock Numbers that match your needs.
Individual Contracting Action Reporting

The data in this section relates to basic contract information for a specific contract from an organization, which has won an award from the US Government for a product or service. The level of detail will vary depending on the Government source from which BidLink obtains the specific information. Each Government agency or division compiles and disseminates contract information in a specific manner. BidLink displays all available information from these sources in a more uniform fashion for easier viewing and analysis. In cases where two or more Government sources provide similar information, BidLink will display each source’s data along with the data origination point.

Current BidLink clients utilize this information in a number of ways including: ordinance usage studies, transportation costing, custom internal reporting, Government spending analysis, competition research and others. A large portion of the historical data goes as far back as the mid 1960’s.

GSA Data

The data in the section relates to GSA-specific contracting actions. The GSA (General Services Administration) is an organization, which was formed on July 1, 1949 with the purpose of providing specialized support to the US Federal Government and DoD and has since expanded its functions to cover many facets of Government support. The data in any of BidLink’s reports under the heading “GSA” will consist of contract award information and related data for sales of “commercial type items” with and without NSN’s to participating GSA customers. GSA customers (i.e. The US Government and its agencies) consist of US State, Federal and DoD agencies located worldwide.

With the variety of items managed by the GSA and sold to “GSA customers”, you can think of the GSA as one huge “superstore”. Products can be shipped either directly from the manufacturers and distributors that supply these products, or from one of the large GSA stocking warehouses. The “catalog” or “commercial-type items” managed by the GSA under long-term government-wide contracts. This type of contract allows “GSA’s customers” to benefit from competitive pricing, higher quantity buys, immediate availability and lower administrative costs.

Under this type of contract, the GSA also allows the “GSA customer” the ability to “shop” and acquire a vast range of products and services directly from commercial suppliers. The duration of these long-term contracts typically range between five and ten years.

To follow are examples of the product and service categories that the GSA manages: tools, hardware, machinery, office supplies, security equipment, law
enforcement equipment, chemicals, cleaning equipment and services, hospitality equipment, building and industrial equipment, etc.

With the information maintained by BidLink, our clients can research such items as: total annual sales under a GSA schedule by an individual company, categories of items or service provided, details on specific products and services sold, and end user information when available.

**Qualification Data – QPL**

The data in this section contains millions of part numbers, which are associated to qualified manufacturers or qualified distributors. These parts may or may not be associated to a specific NSN, however they will be associated to a specific QPL (Qualified Products List) and FSC (Federal Supply Class). BidLink’s QPL database is useful in sourcing items, locating the actual manufacturer of a product and general competition analysis. The displayed information will show both the Government part number and the original manufacturer's part number when available.

Many companies or distributors are qualified by a Government agency to produce a product family or group of products. Benefits to the Government in procuring items under a QPL are better availability of products, minimal quality administration and improved efficiency of the procurement process.

Always verify with the manufacturer and/or appropriate Government agency to verify the current certification status of a QPL-listed source. Contractors may be added or removed from qualification listings at any time due to voluntary or involuntary circumstances.
6.0 TOOLS AND SERVICES

Built-In Tools and Services

BidLink is constantly adding new and powerful tools and services to assist you with your Government Contracting effort.

By clicking on the “Tools and Services” button located in the left navigation, you will have access to the following:

- **System Level Search**
  The System Level Search allows you to locate sub-assembly-level and component-level NSNs for a particular system

- **Parts Locator and Logistics**
  Search for specific inventories and prices for all participating vendors. Also post your inventories for others to search

- **Characteristics Search**
  The Technical Characteristics Search allows you to locate NSNs based on specific characteristics of the item such as size, material and ratings

- **Commodity Sourcing**
  Locate suppliers of obsolete and hard-to-find items with Commodity Sourcing

- **QPL Search**
  The QPL Search will assist you in locating Government qualified suppliers from both current and archive QPLs

- **Contract Action Report**
  Search and review all Contract Actions using the DD-350 data search tool

- **Custom Reports**
  BidLink offers a variety of custom reports such as competition analysis and CAGE Code part number breakdown. See the section entitled “Standard and Custom Reports” for additional information
Quick Search

BidLink’s Quick Search is a handy tool for looking up information on NSNs, CAGE codes, and contracts without having to leave the screen you are currently viewing.

The Quick Search dialog box can be opened from almost anywhere on the BidLink site by clicking the “Quick Search” button in either the left navigation or the bottom navigation.

Quick Search allows you to search NSN data, Vendor data, bids and contract awards. The output is displayed in a floating window on top of your current display, so it will not interrupt your work.

As with all floating windows, if the Quick Search output is taller than your display, you can use the mouse wheel over the floating panel to scroll up and down.

Automated Notification Service

BidLink’s automated notification service makes it even easier to watch for the bids that pertain to your company. For each saved profile, you can choose to be notified by e-mail of any new bids that match your profile. The e-mail notification includes a direct link to your search results so anytime you receive a new bid notification you can be viewing the new bids in two simple clicks.

To setup e-mail notification click on the “E-mail Me” icon and enter in the e-mail address where you want the notifications sent. For additional information on automated notification services visit the BidLink website.
BidLink Assisted Qualification

If you are new to Government contracting or if you have a new item that you would like to get qualified by the Government, BidLink can help.

For new contractors BidLink can help you obtain a CAGE code and help with registration in the Central Contractor Registry. These two items are required before you can do business with the Government.

If your company has a new product to sell or a legacy product that you want to get approved, BidLink can help. BidLink is experienced in the preparation of Source Approval Request packages and can help your company gather all of the necessary information to submit a request for approval.

Standard and Custom Reports

BidLink offers a variety of standard reports that can help you better understand your customers, your competitors, your pricing strategies and where your company fits into the highly dynamic Government marketplace. The following standard reports can be ordered through your BidLink Sales Representative. Reports typically take ten working days for processing.

- Commodity Analysis Report
- CAGE Code Analysis Report
- Competition Analysis Report
- Buying Center Analysis Report
- Procurement History Analysis Report
- CAGE Code Part Number Breakdown
- FIIG Analysis Report
- TIR Breakdown Analysis
- Contractor Geographic Analysis Report
- Packaging Analysis Report
- DMIL Analysis Report

In addition to these standard reports, BidLink can produce many highly customized reports for clients with special needs. Contact your BidLink Sales Representative for further details on ordering and prices for customized reports.
Advertising with BidLink

BidLink offers the ability to advertise your company’s products and services with a few easy clicks. When established as a BidLink Advertiser, a list of your company’s products will be accessible to all BidLink clients so when a company is searching for products that you sell, they will be alerted to contact your company as a possible vendor.

Further, your company’s logo, slogan and description can be displayed on your Vendor Profile so when a client searches for your company they can instantly see your company’s information. All advertising information is fully editable and is managed by you. Contact your BidLink Sales Representative for details.

Inventory Posting Services

BidLink also allows you to upload your current inventory list with available quantities, current pricing, inventory condition and links to your website. By telling BidLink about your current inventories we can quickly and accurately match buyers with sellers adding ease and profitability to both sides of a buy-sell arrangement.

RFQ Services

With BidLink’s RFQ service, you can request quotes from a list of possible vendors selling the products you are looking for. BidLink also offers tools for managing your RFQs so you can make the most economical purchase with every buy.

The Information Center contains a wealth of knowledge to help you with BidLink and defense contracting. Some of the content you will find are:

- Help videos detailing how to use BidLink
- This manual, as well as other help documents
- Quick reference lookup tools for searching FSC, SIC, item name, NAICS.
- Links to government sites
- Technical characteristics search
- Commodity sourcing tool
- System level search
- Help by topic; clicking hotspots in BidLink bring up detailed help
- Pdf documents detailing government standards and requirements
- Frequently asked questions about BidLink
- Contact information and feedback
BidLink provides a single location to access help and information pertaining to use of the BidLink site, as well as tools to help you. The information center can be located by clicking the “Help and Information” button in the left navigation. Clicking the question marks located throughout the site, or clicking on any area with a highlighted background can also bring it up.

There is a wealth of information in the information center, which you are welcome to explore.
8.0 MAKING BIDLINK WORK FOR YOU

Report Printing, Saving and Transporting

Most BidLink reports are generated in .pdf format (portable document format). You will need to have a .pdf reader installed on your local computer to read and print the reports. This reader can be downloaded at http://get.adobe.com/reader/.

Bid Reports

Bid Reports can be generated in a summary or full-text format by clicking the buttons shown in the image below. The “Bid Report – Summary” will generate a summary of the bid containing basic bid information. Typically this will be a one-page report. The “Bid Report – Full” will generate a multi page report containing all of the available information contained within the bid details.

For Bid Reports you are also able to consolidate many bids into a single report. This would be useful for users that wish to print a group of bids all at once, or users that wish to e-mail a group of bids in a single report.

To use this feature, from the bid summary table click the checkboxes next to each bid to be included in the report then click the print button at the bottom of the table. A single report containing all selected bids will be generated and displayed.

Selecting Multiple Bids
NSN Reports

NSN reports can be generated in a summary or full-text format by clicking the buttons shown in the image below. The “NSN Report – Summary” will generate a summary of the NSN containing basic NSN information. Typically this will be a one-page report. The “NSN Report – Full” will generate a multi-page report containing all of the available information for the selected NSN.

Buttons for NSN Reports – Summary or Full

Reports can be saved for future reference or for e-mailing by selecting the ‘SAVE’ option from your .pdf reader.

News

The News section of the BidLink website will display news and articles with topics relating to the website as well as news relating to DoD and Government contracting.
File Export

BidLink has the ability to export a custom file containing select elements of a bid or NSN search result for use within your company’s legacy computer system. For additional information on our File Exporting capabilities contact your BidLink sales representative.

Help and Support

Throughout the BidLink website you will find many links to our extensive help file. Help links are identified by either an underlining of a keyword, a cell that highlights as you move the mouse over it, or by a specific “Help” button.

Click any of these links for instant access to specific topic help. In many case additional links will be located within the text of the help screen.

You will also find several references and educational videos by clicking on the “Help” button located in BidLink’s main navigation menu.

We Care About Your Opinion

Please give us your comments and suggestions on how BidLink can be improved to meet your specific needs. Email us at support@bidlink.net.